

Advanced Photon Source

User Policies and Procedures

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Director's Discretionary Beam Time

Changes made in this revision:

- Consolidates Use of the APS Beam Time Access System (Procedure # 3.1.115, rev. 0) with parts of APS User Administrative Policies and Procedures (Procedure # 3.1.101, rev. 0).
- Updated and elaborated.

Comments for future revisions:

This document has several sections that are identical (or nearly so) with sections in the other beam time access policies cited in Beam Time Access Framework (Procedure # 3.1.115), Section 3.1/Access Modes. The information is duplicated so that each policy can stand alone for ease of reference by users. Changes to this policy should also be made in the other policies as appropriate.

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Director's Discretionary Beam Time

POLICY

1 PURPOSE

The objective of this policy is to provide a mechanism for access for classified, proprietary, or industrially sensitive projects for which a full description of the proposed work cannot be made publicly available.

2 SCOPE

This policy applies to all users of APS director's discretionary beam time. For the overarching policy for access to beam time, see [Beam Time Access Framework, Procedure # 3.1.115](#).

3 POLICY

3.1 Definition

Very rarely, cases arise in which the prospective user cannot provide enough information for an adequate review through the General User process because of the confidential nature of the research (e.g., proprietary, industrially sensitive, or classified projects). These cases are handled through use of Director's discretionary beam time. The user creates a General User proposal in the usual fashion, but review and allocation are done differently.

3.2 Available Time

All beamlines offering General User beam time are available for Director's discretionary beam time. APS can allocate up to 5% of the beam time on a single beamline on a discretionary basis. This beam time is deducted from the beamline's General User obligation. At each cycle, the time set aside for Director's discretionary beam time is subtracted from the time available for allocation for the General User Beamtime Allocation Committee (BAC), as described in Section 3.6/Available Time in [Beam Time Access Framework \(Procedure # 3.1.115\)](#).

3.3 Calls for Proposals

Requests for Director's discretionary beam time access are solicited, reviewed, and accepted three times a year, in conjunction with the three run cycles. The deadline is the same as for General User requests.

3.4 Proposals and Beam Time Requests

Time is requested through the Web-based Beam Time Access System. This online system enables the APS and beamline management to collect and document beam-time usage and provides the basis for DOE-mandated usage reports.

In this system, a *proposal* describes the work to be performed, and a *beam time request* (BTR) against the proposal identifies where and when the user wants to do that work. The proposal and the first beam time request are created together. For subsequent visits for the same work, a new request must be created against the original proposal; thus, a proposal can have multiple beam time requests.

The Beam Time Access System (in combination with the Beamtime Scheduling System) associates each beam usage with a specific

- Proposal
- Beam time request (BTR)
- Beam time attribute set (e.g., proprietary/nonproprietary, General User, rapid access, beamline commissioning/start-up, National User Facility, etc.)
- Experiment Safety Assessment Form (ESAF).

3.5 Proposal Lifetime

The lifetime of Director's discretionary beam time proposals is the same as standard General User proposals: they remain eligible for time for two years (six run cycles), or until the amount of time approved by reviewers is used up.

3.6 Scientific Review

If, during the standard GU review process, the Proposal Review Panel or macromolecular crystallography reviewers conclude that they do not have enough information to complete the review, they assign a score of 0. Proposals with a score of 0 are automatically sent to the APS Deputy Director for X-ray Science for further consideration. The User Office asks the spokesperson for the proposal to provide additional information about the potential impact and importance of the research to the Deputy Director, who reviews the proposal and additional information and communicates a decision to the User Office before the meeting of the General User Beam Time Allocation Committee (BAC).

3.7 Beamline Comment

The User Office solicits a review from the beamline requested in the proposal. As for General User proposals, beamline staff have the opportunity to comment (through an interface in the Beam Time Access System) on the technical feasibility or other issues of proposals for DDB. They can address any issue that bears on whether beam time should be awarded, including (but not limited to) environment, safety, and health issues; the past performance of an investigator; specific outreach on the part of the beamline management; or a unique suitability of the beamline to accommodate the proposal.

3.8 Allocation

The User Office notifies the beamline when a proposal has been accepted for DDB. The time awarded is subtracted from the baseline available shifts on the beamline for that cycle (see Section 3.6/Available Time in Beam Time Access Framework, [Procedure # 3.1.115](#)). Beam time requests on proposals of this type are made directly available to the beamline for scheduling in the Beamtime Scheduling System.

3.9 Scheduling

The beamline on which the request was allocated is responsible for scheduling and coordinating the visit. Visits must be scheduled in the Beamtime Scheduling System.

3.10 Alternative Experimental Modes

Some experiments are carried out by “remote users,” that is, users located elsewhere who control the beamline through computer access. Some beamlines accommodate “mail-in users”: the users send samples by mail and local staff collect the data on the users’ behalf. Although mail-in and remote users are subject to slightly different administrative requirements (see Site Access by Users and Visitors, [Procedure # 3.1.43](#)), for the purposes of beam time allocation and reporting, the present policy holds just as it does for conventional experimental visits.

3.11 Declaration of Significance

Within 12 months of completion of the DDB, the spokesperson must provide the APS with follow-up information on the significance of the work, as specified in Evaluation of Unpublished Research ([Procedure # 3.1.45](#)). This follow-up deadline can be extended on request.

3.12 Responsibilities of Users

Users must complete training, have a user agreement in place, submit forms for safety review in a timely manner, acknowledge the APS and the beamline(s) in publications, and submit publications to the APS. Users who damage equipment owned by a CAT or APS after receiving appropriate training in its use will be held liable for damage, according to the provisions of their institutional user agreements. For a full statement of user responsibilities, see Beam Time Access Framework, Section 3.10 ([Procedure # 3.1.115](#)).

4 DEFINITIONS

Beamline: All instrumentation and facilities that extend from the source in the storage ring to an experiment station.

Beam Time Access System: Web-based proposal submission and management system used for requesting all types of beam time.

Beam Time Allocation Committees (BACs): Committees that determine which beamlines will host which beam time requests and how much time each request will receive.

Beam time request (BTR): A web form (and the resulting electronic record) associated with a specific proposal, used to request beam time during a particular cycle on a particular beamline. This form is used both when the proposal is initially submitted and for subsequent cycles as long as the proposal is active.

Beamtime Scheduling System: Web-based system used by beamline staff to schedule all APS beam time. A specific beam time request is associated with each unit of beam time.

Cycle: One of three periods of beam time access each year, referring generally to all the phases of submission, review, allocation, and scheduling. Also called “run” or “scheduling period” when referring to the dates of actual beam availability.

General User: An investigator who applies for beam time through the APS peer-review proposal process for General User time.

General User (beam) time: The standard access mode for external experimenters. All beam time in this mode is allocated through the APS General User proposal process.

Mail-in service/users: An experimental mode in which users send samples by mail and local staff collect the data on the users’ behalf.

Proposal: Electronic document comprising the description of the proposed research and all associated beam time requests (BTRs). Created in the Beam Time Access System.

Proposal spokesperson: Person identified on the proposal submission form as the primary point of contact for communication about the proposal.

Proposal Review Panels (PRPs): Peer-review groups, organized by technique or scientific discipline, that evaluate the scientific merit and technical feasibility of proposals and provide a rating for each.

Remote access/users: Experimental mode in which a researcher uses remote computer access to conduct experimental work at the APS.

5 ASSISTANCE

The initial point of contact for questions about this policy is the APS User Program Manager.

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6 RELATED POLICIES

- Parent policy: Beam Time Access Framework ([Procedure # 3.1.115](#))
- User Access and Administration Framework ([Procedure # 3.1.101](#))

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Director's Discretionary Beam Time

PROCEDURE

1 INTRODUCTION

Establishing access to beam time involves navigating interactions with the various data systems the APS uses to manage and report on user activity. Two numbers are key to these interactions: the user **badge number** and the **proposal number**. Once a badge number is assigned to an individual, he or she keeps that number forever. The badge number is used both for authorizing site access and for associating an individual with specific experimental activity. The proposal number is key to scientific review, safety review, scheduling, and evaluation.

1.1 Purpose

This procedure establishes how users, User Office staff, and beamline staff interact with APS data systems so that, in the end, a specific group needing Director's discretionary beam time is scheduled to do a specific experiment at a specific beamline at a specific time.

1.2 Scope

The procedure does not address the choice of an appropriate beamline, proposal development, or processes internal to individual beamlines.

1.3 References

The APS User Calendar, published on the APS web site, lists deadlines for proposal submission, run start and end dates, and schedules for proposal review and beam time allocation.

2 BACKGROUND

As a national user facility and publicly funded resource, APS has a responsibility to ensure that beam time is utilized efficiently and to best effect. As a result, APS must document, monitor, and report on the usage of the facility and the impact of the science carried out. Because of the volume of activity and the specificity of reporting requirements, the APS relies on many complex and interconnected data management systems to track and report on people, time, experiments, and experimental resources. Each request for beam time follows a path through these systems.

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3 PRECAUTIONS AND LIMITATIONS

The following are ways to avoid common errors that result in confusion or missed opportunities:

- [1] **Choose the correct individual as the proposal spokesperson.** The proposal spokesperson is the person to whom all official correspondence about the proposal is sent. Thus, it should be someone who has some responsibility for the project and who is able to respond promptly to communication about it. An externally led group should not list a local beamline staff member as the proposal spokesperson.
- [2] **Have the spokesperson register and get a badge number well in advance.** A spokesperson badge number is required to create a proposal.
- [3] **Submit a request for each cycle in which time is needed.** After the initial proposal submission, the user must explicitly submit a beam time request for consideration in later cycles.
- [4] **Click the “submit” button to send completed proposal or beam time request to APS.** The APS cannot act on a proposal or request that is complete and saved but not submitted.

4 PREREQUISITE ACTIONS

- [1] Team Leader See the Team Leader procedure in User Access and Administration Framework ([Procedure # 3.1.101](#)) for an overview of the process of managing an experiment at APS.
- [2] User Office Manage expired proposals in the Beam Time Access System. Before each proposal deadline, update the eligibility of existing proposals based on proposal lifetime and notify spokespersons.

5 PROCEDURE

5.1 Create Proposal

***NOTE** An APS badge number is required to access the proposal submission system.*

- [1] User Obtain badge numbers for proposal spokesperson and anyone else who will need to view the proposal online. See Site Access by Users and Visitors: Procedure ([Procedure # 3.1.43](#)), Section 3.

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***NOTE** The same web password is used for all APS web-based systems, e.g., the system for processing Experiment Safety Assessment Forms, which you will use later.*

- [2] User Log in to the Beam Time Access System at http://beam.aps.anl.gov/pls/apsweb/gup0005.start_page. If you are a **first-time external user**, enter your badge number as both your username and password, and follow the prompts to create a password. The screen Beam Time Request - Main Menu is displayed (hereafter Main Menu).

***NOTE** It may be appropriate to note in the body of the proposal that details cannot be provided due to the confidential nature of the work.*

- [3] User On the Main Menu, on the panel Create a New Proposal, click the General User button to start the proposal. Once you save the proposal, you can return to it later. **Make a note of the proposal number** for future use in this and other APS systems. Complete the proposal form, **and submit the proposal**. See tips below on the proposal system overall and the beamtime request screen.

TIPS ON BEAMTIME REQUEST SCREEN

- You may specify one, two, or three beamlines in order of preference.
- For APS-operated beamlines, you must specify which instrument you want to use.
- If the “Any appropriate beamline” box is checked, your request will be considered for all beamlines where your experiment is feasible.
- If you want to use two different beamlines for different parts of your experiment, complete a separate beam time request for the second beamline within the same proposal.

GENERAL TIPS

- When you click a different tab, information on the current screen is saved.
- Attachments may be added on the Abstracts screen. Keep attachments brief. Reviewers prefer short attachments that are directly relevant to the proposal.
- On the Experimenters screen, the APS strongly encourages use of the “Find” link, which permits automatic entry of existing user contact information.
- If you are doing an MX experiment and have multiple samples, then complete a separate sample page for each sample within the same proposal.
- If the proposal is proprietary or classified, submit as much information as permitted and indicate the reason for brevity so that appropriate review can be done.
- **The APS cannot act on your request until you send it by clicking on the Submit button.**

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5.2 Conduct Scientific Review

NOTE Dep. Dir. is the APS Deputy Director for X-ray Science

- [1] User Office Transmit request to Deputy Director for X-ray Science [for review score of 0, automated in Beam Time Management System].
- [2] User Office Request further information on proposed work from proposer and transmit to Deputy Directory for X-ray Science.
- [3] Dep. Dir. Review supplemental information and follow up with proposer and beamline as needed.
- [4] Dep. Dir. Make decision to accept/reject proposal.
- [5] User Office Record review comments, decision, and (if accepted) total beam time commitment in Beam Time Access System.
- [6] User Office Notify user of outcome.

5.3 Allocate Beam Time

- [1] User Office Before Beamtime Allocation Committee meeting for General User time, confirm amount of time assigned to DDB for a given cycle; reduce available General User time on affected beamlines by that amount for the cycle. See Section 3.6/Available Time in Beam Time Access Framework ([Procedure # 3.1.115](#)) for details.

5.4 Schedule Beam Time

NOTE BL Coord. is Beamline Coordinator.

- [1] BL Coord. Schedule user visit in APS Beamtime Scheduling System and notify user.

5.5 Conduct Experiment

- [1] User See User Access and Administration Framework ([Procedure # 3.1.101](#)) for the requirements for site access, safety, and follow-up.

5.6 Request Time in Future Cycles

NOTE If you cannot locate an existing proposal, contact the APS User Office, apsuser@aps.anl.gov, 630-252-9090.

- [1] User For each cycle for which you need beam time (during the approved duration of the proposal), access the existing active proposal and create **and submit** a new beam time request from within that proposal.

6 DOCUMENTS/RECORDS CREATED BY THIS PROCEDURE

The documents/records listed below will be created in the execution of this procedure. The documents created will depend on the type of proposal concerned.

Description of Document/Record	Custodian	Storage Location and Medium
Proposal	User Program Manager	Beam Time Access System
Beam time requests	User Program Manager	Beam Time Access System
Deputy Director comments	User Program Manager	Beam Time Access System
Beamline comments	User Program Manager	Beam Time Access System
Decision notification to user	User Program Manager	E-mail
Scheduled beam time record	AES/Project Specialist	Beamtime Scheduling System
Scheduled beam time notification email	Beamline Coordinator	Beamline email server, with backup in Information Services if sent from Beamtime Scheduling System

7 TRAINING REQUIRED

No training is required to execute this procedure.

8 FEEDBACK AND IMPROVEMENT

If you are using this procedure and have comments or suggested improvements for it, please go to the [APS Policies and Procedures Comment Form](#)^{*} to submit your input to a Procedure Administrator. If you are reviewing this procedure in workflow, your input must be entered in the comment box when you approve or reject the procedure.

Instructions for execution-time modifications to a policy/procedure can be found in the following document: Field Modification of APS Policy/Procedure ([APS 1408152](#)).

^{*} http://centraldocs.aps.anl.gov/comment_form.php